

March 21, 2013

Environmental Services Advisory Committee (ESAC) 2012 Annual Report (January 1-December 31, 2012)

In 2001, a Solid Waste Advisory Committee was established by Mayor and Council to work with the citizens of Tucson in order to implement the “One & One Plus Recycling Program.” Since that time Mayor and Council expanded the scope of the committee to advise on all the programs and services of the Environmental Services Department (ES) and changed the name of the Committee to Environmental Services Advisory Committee (ESAC).

ESAC has 13 voting members which represent residents or businesses within Tucson: 1 appointed by the Mayor and each member of the Council (7 total), and 6 members nominated by the City Manager. (Attachment 1) The full committee met 9 times in 2012. There are also three subcommittees. These are Finance; Collections, Recycling & Public Information; and Environmental-Engineering.

One of the functions of ESAC is to “Provide an Annual Report to the Governing Body on the operations of Environmental Services.” This Annual Report summarizes ESAC activities in calendar year 2012 in the following areas:

- Financial Planning, including review of ES operating and capital budgets and revenue sources
- Development of ES Rates and Fees
- Waste Reduction and Diversion Programs
- Groundwater Protection

FINANCIAL PLANNING

The ESAC Finance Subcommittee held 7 meetings in 2012 to review ES’s proposed operating Budget 5-year Capital Projects Budget, and Revenue projections. The subcommittee also reviewed ES’s updated Cost of Service Model. The subcommittee reviewed the budget and Chapter 15 code recommendations made by ES financial staff, and then the plan was presented to the full ESAC with a recommendation for its approval in May.

The subcommittee reviewed ES’s expenses and revenue projections on a monthly basis and noted the health of the ES fund. As an enterprise fund, the department must maintain a positive balance and it has done so. At the end of the fiscal year, the Finance Subcommittee noted with approbation, that ES is tracking both future liabilities for long-term landfill closure and post-closure monitoring costs, and accumulating necessary capital project reserves for development of future landfill cells and operation reserves.

ES RATES AND FEES

The Finance Subcommittee reviewed ES’s Cost of Service Model and Rates and Fee Proposals for FY 2013. ES developed an operating budget for FY 2013 that is \$2,390,860 below the Fiscal Year 2012 Adopted Budget and therefore did not propose an increase in residential fees, landfill fees or the Groundwater Protection (GWP) fee.

ESAC's approval of proposed adjustments to miscellaneous fees and revisions to Chapter 15 of The Tucson City Code was communicated to Mayor & Council with a letter of support dated May 22, 2012. A public hearing was conducted on May 22, 2012, and the proposed ES Rates and Fees were subsequently approved by Mayor and Council.

WASTE REDUCTION AND DIVERSION PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

The Tucson Mayor and Council originally established ESAC to provide oversight for the implementation of the Blue Barrel Recycling Program. In 2005, the Mayor and Council charged ESAC with acting as an advisory body for ES operations and financial responsibility. Waste reduction and diversion however, has been an important concern of the committee and the Collections, Recycling, and Public Information subcommittee of ESAC. The Collections, Recycling and Public Information subcommittee met 8 times during 2012.

Members of ESAC participated in the grand opening on September 12, 2012, of the new Materials Recovery Facility owned and operated by ReCommunity that handles recyclables collected by ES. This modern plant allows the collection and processing of all plastics except Styrofoam, and continues the processing of glass, paper, cardboard, tin, and aluminum.

The Collections, Recycling, and Public Information subcommittee has been very interested in moving forward programs to encourage more recycling in City parks. They received two presentations on the current recycling efforts at City parks and the requirement that large-scale events at City parks have recycling opportunities available.

The subcommittee also received reports on the Department's commercial waste audit program and offered suggestions to increase participation.

The subcommittee reviews the public outreach efforts associated with new programs or service changes to make sure questions that residents may have are fully addressed and explained. They have also supported programs to encourage more participation in recycling by advertising on collection vehicles and continuing a public school environmental education outreach program.

A member of ESAC participated in the Plastic Bag Task Force and reported regularly to the subcommittee as well as to the ESAC. The Task Force worked diligently to reach a consensus on efforts to reduce the use of plastic bags and their impact as litter in the community and cause of problems with the MRF. ESAC was very disappointed with the decision of Mayor and Council not to adopt the Task Force's recommendations.

ESAC was very proud that Tucson received the "Municipality of the Year" award from the Arizona Recycling Coalition.

With ES taking full charge of the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program for the region, the subcommittee has spent more time monitoring this program. ES instituted a pilot project to invite customers to call in and request that ES make a special pick-up of HHW for a charge of \$25. There has been limited response to this program to date.

In an effort to cut costs and continue to reduce air pollution, ES is purchasing new collection vehicles that will be run by Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). The twelve new trucks to be delivered in 2013 will all be run on CNG and that requires a fueling station. Efforts are underway to build such a fueling station. The subcommittee has monitored these efforts, as well as the movement to cut costs by returning to alley collection of trash and recyclables in 300-gallon containers instead of the individual 95-gallon or 48-gallon containers.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

The Environmental Engineering Subcommittee met twice in 2012 to discuss remediation efforts at various closed landfills (e.g. soil-vapor extraction and groundwater pump and treat systems). They also reviewed remediation efforts for the legacy contamination from the old, closed cell at Los Reales Landfill, and Brownfields projects in the Rio Nuevo Redevelopment District in downtown Tucson and in the historic Fort Lowell Park neighborhood.

It has been a busy year and the members of ESAC thank the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to serve the community and support the work of this outstanding department.

Margot W. Garcia
Chair, 2012

Attachment 1
Environmental Services Advisory Committee (ESAC)
As of December 31, 2012

<u>Appointer (Classification)</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Mayor	Lisa Shipek	10/8/2012	12/7/2015
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	Margaret N. Bowman	9/5/2011	9/4/2015
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	Sandra Fimbres	8/9/2011	8/8/2015
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	Tina E. Cook	8/9/2011	6/10/2015
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	Margot Garcia (Chair)	5/5/2009	4/10/2013
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	Eva Macias	8/9/2011	8/8/2015
Mayor & Council (City Manager nominee)	1 Vacant Position		
Ward 1	Yvonne Merrill	12/15/201	12/7/2015
Ward 2	Vacant		
Ward 3	Rachel Miller	2/10/2012	12/2/2013
Ward 4	Michael W. Block	12/5/2011	3/28/2013
Ward 5	Ellen Rauch	9/7/2010	12/2/2013
Ward 6	Wilson Hughes	12/8/2009	12/2/2013